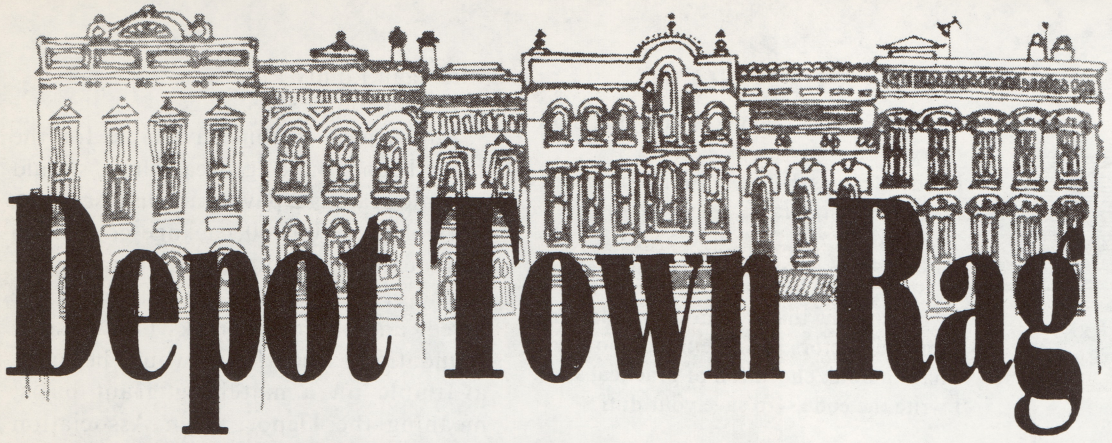


Depot Town Rag

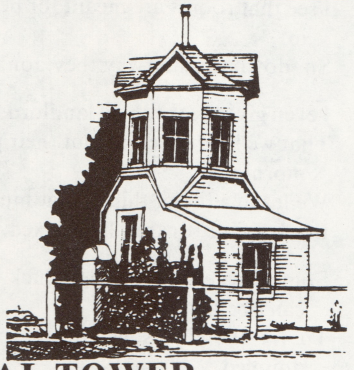
FREE 100% RAG CONTENT

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

MICHIGAN EQUITY PROGRAM FUNDS SOUGHT

City Hall's Sue Dickinson is known as "the woman who saved the Gilbert House; and if the City's senior economic planner has her way, she'll save the Michigan Central Railroad depot, too. Dickinson has yet another dynamic development plan in her current portfolio - and it has a lot to do with the north side of Cross Street in Depot Town.

Cont'd on pg. 2



THE DEPOT TOWN SIGNAL TOWER

From the 1976 "Depot Town Plan"

"Community Development funds would be well spent by the city for the construction of a railroad signal tower. The structure would serve as a "sign" for Depot Town, providing visual identification and reinforcing a sense of neighborhood identity."

A SECOND EXCLAMATION POINT FOR YPSILANTI!

When they built the now-famous Water Tower at Cross and Washtenaw the railroad signal tower in Depot Town was already an old landmark in Ypsilanti. A Fourth of July parade photo from 1892 shows a float with a replica of Abe Lincoln's cabin turning the corner and the old octagonal tower stands in the background. It was surrounded by hollyhocks and looked worn and tired, even then. That graceful, but smaller, tower had an adjoining shed which housed the counter-weights for the train gates and kept horses from bolting onto the tracks when the steam trains passed. The octagonal second story afforded the gate-keeper a view up and down Cross and River Streets, as well as both directions of the tracks.

Over the years, the signal tower was replaced with a squat rectangular version which was, in turn, destroyed by the 1939 train wreck which also did-in parts of the Michigan Central Railroad Depot and the tabacconist next to today's Sidetrack. Since then, the signals have been electrically operated and housed in small boxes beside the tracks. In another generation, (if the trains are running at all) they'll probably be "digital" and powered by micro-chips.

Although the steam engines and horses are gone, the great excitement of the historic railroad district remains. Today's Depot Towners are directed by billboards on the Interstate and signage throughout the city -- and now it seems appropriate to replicate the 1860's Signal Tower as an emblem which says, "This is it. You're in Ypsilanti's Historic Depot Town. Welcome back to the Good Old Days."

In 1981, after the Depot Town Association had completed moving a one-hundred-year-old caboose to the district, they set their sights upon the return of the Signal Tower. James Waite, a member who is also a perservation architect at Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia drew up plans from the ancient photographs using humans and the hollyhocks for scale, but since then DTA's plan has languished on the drawing boards.

Today, the Depot Town Association has taken the recommendation of the 1976 "Depot Town Plan" as a project for the coming season and embarks upon a drive for support for the replication of that long-gone Signal Tower. Matching grants and other funds from the city are being persued, as well as individual tax-deductible financial contributions for the building of the edifice. Permission is being sought from Amtrak to put the building on its original site.

Other than being the "home-base sign post" for the neighborhood, the Signal Tower would be used as a visitor's information booth and a display space during such events as the Heritage Festival and Boomer Days.

NOVEMBER 1986

down in Depot Town

Open until 8pm
on Fridays

All day Sunday, 11/2,
String 30,000 lights
in the Freight House for the
Festival of Lights

8pm Thursday, 11/6,
The Foundation
in the Caboose

All day Sunday, 11/15,
Depot Town Open Houses

7:30 pm Thursday, 11/20,
The Association
in the Caboose

6pm, Sunday, November 23,
Grand Opening
Festival of Lights
Riverside Park

7:30pm Thursday, 11/27,
Engine Club
in the Caboose

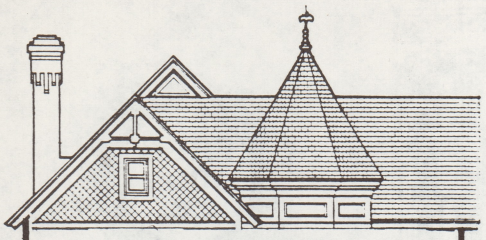
Friday, December 5,
Santa Claus Parade
starts here

BUILDERS

I saw them tearing a building down.
A gang of men in Depot Town.
With a yo heave ho and a lusty yell
They swung a beam and the sidewall fell.
I asked the foreman if these men were as skilled
as those he would hire if he were to build.
He laughed and said, "Oh, no indeed,
common labor is all I need.
For they can wreck in a day or two
what builders have taken years to do."

So I asked myself, as I went my way,
which of these roles am I to play?
Am I the builder, who works with care
measuring life by the rule and square;
Or am I the wrecker who walks the town
content in the role of tearing down?

-Anonymous



If you can't find it up in the attic, it's probably down in Depot Town
(see below)

Depot Town
AUCTION GALLERY
33 East Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Antiques
Buy, Sell, Trade, Auction
482-7500 Open Wed. Thru Sun. 11-5

THOMPSON BUILDING MALL
412 N. River
over 4000 square feet featuring several dealers
furniture stripping
refinishing & reapir
brass & metal polishing
mirror resilvering
all types glass repair
including stained glass & beveling
PICK UP & DELIVERY AVAILABLE
12-6 daily
484-4288

DEPOT EXCHANGE ANTIQUES
54 East Cross Street
Professional Furniture Stripping & Refinishing
10% off to RAG Readers
WE BUY AND SELL ANTIQUES

Specializing in Unusual & Different Costume Jewelry

VINTAGE PASSION
Antiques - Collectables - Art Deco
Vintage Clothing and Accessories
Tuesday - Saturday: 11:00 to 6:00
Sunday: Noon to 5:00
32 E. Cross St.
Historic Depot Town
Owner
Linda J. Williams
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Jim MacDonald's Antiques
Apple Annie's Vintage Clothing
29 East Cross • 481-0555
Tuesday-Saturday 12-6 Sunday 12-4

THE CITY'S SONG

I write the codes that make Slum Landlords cry,
I write the rules that keep your furniture dry.
I write the standards that will spread the wealth.
I write the codes that guard your health

I write the law that says no two-pole wire.
I send inspectors in to see there's no fire.
I have a book chock full of practical stuff.
I write the code -- to save your duff.

No swimming in basements.
No holes in the wall.
I see that rooms are meant for people to live in,
So, down the stairway they don't fall.

I even give the troubled landlords a warning,
That we'll be checking out their place in the morning.
We leave a list of things that must be fixed
In easy time, or they'll be nixed.

Some owners say,"tough luck," they just can't be troubled
To fix the floors where all the rent has doubled.
(They have no money in their bank accounts?)
Your home's a mess, their profit mounts.

The Press will print the owner's sorry tale
We'd like to see the dump put up for sale.
Sweat equity and smart investments
Help folks get bold enough to protest rents.

Put screens in windows.
Switch on the lights.
Repair that plaster.
We're humans who demand our rights!

I write the codes for Ypsilanti's people
And fly them from Town Hall's ancient steeple.
Historic Districts sing another song:
Why do you think we stayed this long?

Michigan Equity Program
(Cont'd from page 1)

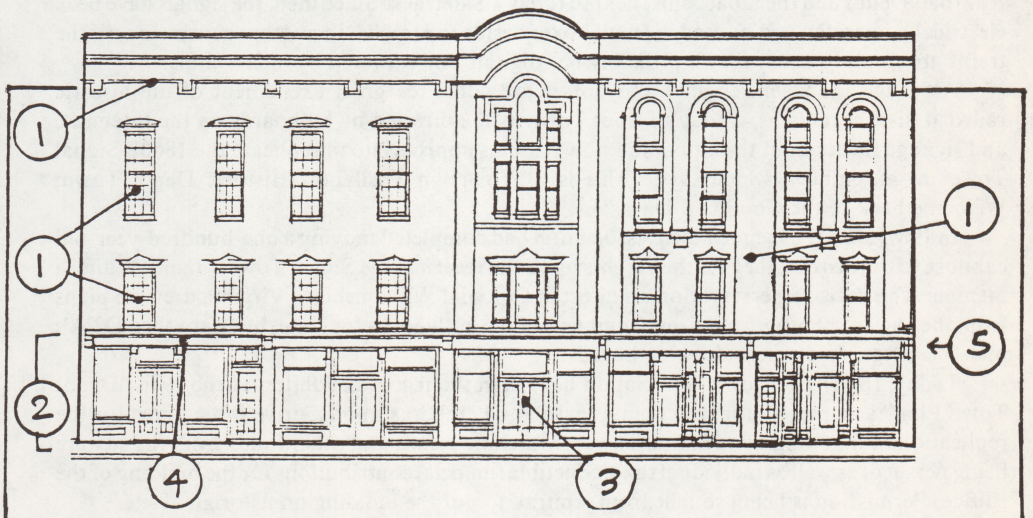
Funds have become available for the Frog Island parking area which should provide drainage, paving and landscaping. Part of the $100,000 package could also include the replication of the Signal Tower at the crux of East Cross Street, River Street and the train tracks (see existing foundation). Such funds would be made available on a matching grant basis, meaning the Depot Town Association would have to match half the expected $10,000 cost of the historic structure. There are other strings attatched for the Association, too, such as access to the property, availability of electricity, and insurance coverage.

WASHTENAW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

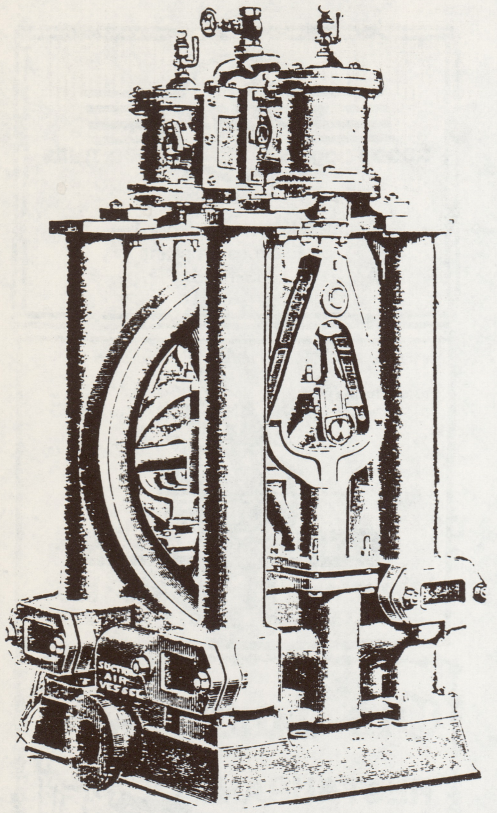
Courses of interest to Depot Town business:

— Small business Start-up
— The Business Plan: Your Blueprint for Success
— The Legal Aspects of Starting and Running Your Own Business
— Financing Your Small Business Venture
— Basic Accounting and Recordkeeping for Small Business
— Polishing Your Presentation Skills
— Dual Career Issues for Individuals and Employers
— Building Your Business Through Direct Mail
— Preventing People Burnout

CALL 973-3616 FOR CUSTOMIZED ON-SITE TRAINING



The recomendations of the 1976 'Depot Town Plan' may have seemed far-fetched to some, but look at the Follett House today!



DEPOT TOWN ANTIQUE ENGINE CLUB FORMED

After staging their third exhibition of vintage gas and steam engines in the block, twenty-one preservationists came together to form the newest of many associations in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town with James A. Monaghan as their president. Their first official event under the umbrella of the Depot Town Association, Inc. was their October 4th event at the Farmer's Market Fall Fair. Since that time they have helped President Jim's brother organize another engine exhibition for his pizza complex at Domino's Farm.

A constitution and by-laws committee has been formed and the DTAEC plans to convene on the fourth Thursday of each month in the Old Caboose. For their formation, at least, the group will function as a committee of the DTA.

AUTHENTIC STOVE INSTALLED BY ENGINE CLUBBERS

Charles Goff, a charter member of the Depot Town Antique Engine Club has installed an authentic caboose stove for the district's use in the Old Caboose. Not your typical pot-bellied stove, a caboose stove is a low wide square-shaped hunk of iron and boasts a high rim to keep pots from sliding off while the train is moving. Long bolts fasten both the top and bottom of the stove to the timber construction of the caboose frame. Look it over, but don't light a fire. It's not completely connected yet.

HITCHED IN (NOT TO) THE OLD CABOOSE

Those weren't railroad crossing bells you heard on Friday, October 10th; they were wedding bells - coming from the more than one hundred year old DTA caboose in Depot Town. The occasion was the marriage of Linda Williams, of Vintage Passion, and Rick Hakala. Mayor Peter Murdock officiated in what looked like a tiny, antique chapel all done up in white eyelet lace with white streamers and wedding bells. Next morning Linda officiated and modeled for a fashion show at Aubree's Second Floor. That's Depot Town: unique, creative and unusual!

DRAWING THE LINE IN DEPOT TOWN

The new Cross Street Bridge has been finished a long time now, but the center line of the eight-year-old street paving just got painted last month. We didn't see them do it, but the result looks like they started upon the hill and didn't really get the hang of it until they crossed the bridge. Maybe they were distracted by the fall beauty of Riverside Park and Frog Island on the way.

One jog in the line indicates they may have been signalling for the entrance to this winter's Festival of Lights.

It's probably a good thing they got it crisp and neat down here in the neighborhood, though, since all the construction projects could cause tourists to be distracted and wander to the wrong side of the street.

Tourists are warned, however, not to blame failing eyesight or astigmatism when heading back to Ann Arbor. It's not their eyes doing tricks on them; it was the painters'.

SOUTH SIDE PORCHES PROLIFERATE

The Shankwilers started it all more than ten years ago when they added a huge deck to the second floor rear of their Artrain Building residence. Last summer saw the next new porch appear at the rear of the Newel Block to serve the second and third floor residents above Miller's Ice Cream Parlor.

Now, the Newel Block has 'grandfathered' the tiny balcony facing Ninde Street, replacing it a piece at a time, since removing and replacing would not have fit the City code for structures hanging over property not owned. It's one of the smallest and prettiest structures around.

Also finished this month is the three-storey stack of decks on the back of the Masonic Block, behind Hon's Flowers and River Art Works.

With all these comfortable places to sit, we probably won't get anything done next summer!

Hallowe'en Thanks to all the neighbors who helped to make this year's party such a great success!

—Linda Williams
Vintage Passion

Now recycling newspapers, glass, metal cans, and oil

YPSILANTI RECYCLING PROJECT
SITE HOURS: 9-3 P.M. Sat.
For more information
STOP BY OR CALL
(office phone) 487-9727
Located behind 32 E. Cross Street

Ted's AUTO ELECTRIC
307 N. River St. Ypsilanti, MI
Phone: 483-1238

Richard C. Laflin
bd
310 N. River
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
487-1510
B & D RETAIL PLUMBING and HEATING, INC.

CITY RADIATOR
110 N. River
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
483-2248

IKE'S DEPOT TOWN BARBER SHOP
40 E. CROSS YPSILANTI
483-6300

D.T.A 16 OCTOBER 1986

Minutes for August and September read and approved in the Secretary's absence:

Treasury:

Total	$8865.83
General	9485.06
Rag	(305.70)
Jazz	-0-
Caboose Rehab	15.00
Hallowe'en	84.78
Billboard	(467.24)
Boomer Days	53.93

Jazz: $7880.00 from Frog Island to be split between DTA and WEMU. $4080.00 from Heritage Competition to be split three ways between DTA, WEMU and Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. Frog Island and Heritage Jazz earned DTA $5024.00 after expenses and splits.

Request $1500.00 start-up expenses from WEMU for Winter Jazz Series. Suggest overall income (cash-flow) statement. Budget format for Series suggested.

February Concert may try new format. Should we admit non-drinking patrons who are minors?

Hallowe'en Party will be sponsored by our merchants, chaired by Vintage Passion's Linda Williams. DTA alocated $35 for donuts and cider. Activities will run from 5-7 pm. A flyer is imminent.

Merchants will be **open until 8 pm** Friday nights until Christmas.

Player Piano has been repaired again, for $35 (DTA) and will be used for the Domino's Farm Engine show and for the Hallowe'en Party.

City Body Shop is being actively investigated by the Sobry brothers. They plan to visit the November meeting of the Foundation.

Travel Michigan sends thanks to Depot Town for participating their tour of the State for travel and bus tour coordinators.

Antique Caboose Stove donated by Antique Engine Club member, Charles Goff.

A Festival Of Lights tree will be donated ($225) by the Association.

Depot Town sign proposal for lighting. Follett House Associates will pick up a portion of the cost.

Victorian Holiday brochure - $50 allotted.

S.O.S. Casino proposal was not acceptable, due to great expenses and risk with little or no benefit to the goals of the Association.

Domino's Farm antique engine show sign, stage and posters are ready for the October 25th event.

Tom Hinchberger, of Photo Street, visited, talked about Water Street, City Body.

Rosier Players, of Jackson Community College, could be an asset to Depot Town and Freight House. Meadows will investigate possible relationship.

Student grant-writers for land purchases was proposed by Eric Ward.

Golden Goose Award to the "reigning dieties" for twenty-five days of rain which held up this building season's renovation in the block.

Best Yet Award to Rick Hakala and Linda Williams of Vintage Passion, for holding their wedding in the Old Caboose.

Adjourned at 9:16 pm.

RAIL MAIL

Gary McKeever, Depot Town Association:

Ypsilanti has always greeted Artrain's presence with great enthusiasm and made our staff feel completely at home. Our most recent visit, however, was an extraordinary example of Depot Town hospitality. We certainly appreciated the Association's gift of "food coupons" at the restaurants in the area; the complimentary meals really helped stretch our rather tight personal budgets.

We hope, in turn, that you felt Artrain gave you a 'good return' on you investment." The 3968 visitors who toured our facilities seemed to genuinely enjoy this year's exhibition and the volunteers who assisted us on board were excited as well. It gives us a sense of pride that Artrain can make a contribution to Ypsilanti's cultural life.

Undoubtedly, we will meet agian. Until then, we wish you well in all of your endeavaors.

Sincerely,

The Artrain On—board Staff:

Joan Krueger, Manager
Mark Roegner, Technician
Mark Merriam, Teachincian
Don Reynolds, Resident Artist
Jenny Mendes, Resident Artist

'APOSTROPHIES?' *We know The Rag was making a point about punctuation, but this point is about spelling. The plural is 'apostrophes!' We know it looks like 'a-postrofes, but it's correct. Tsk, tsk. What a disastrous headline to begin your fine October issue with.*

—Constant reader

(Next month someone will probably tell us that a preposition is a bad thing to end a sentence with! -ed.)

Depot Town Rag

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG:

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc., a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

The Depot Town Association, Inc.,
Gary McKeever, President
The Caboose, 400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Depot Town Shops
Open 'til 8 pm
Fridays
until Christmas

THE GRAND TRUNK, LTD.
CARDS & GIFTS
CALIFORNIA DREAMERS
ROCKSHOTS
COLONIAL CANDLES
SUZYS ZOO
WINDSOCKS
STATIONERY
IMPRINTING
GIFT WRAP
MAIL RECEIVING
ARTIST CONSIGNMENTS
15 E. CROSS
YPSILANTI, MI 485-4994
HOURS - 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.
IN HISTORIC DEPOT TOWN

BIG BOB'S MAGAZINES
Magazines
Comics
Celebrity Posters
WE SPECIAL ORDER FOR YOU!
HOURS: MON-WED & SAT 11AM-6PM
FRI 11AM-7PM • SUN 12N-4PM
CLOSED THURSDAY
50 E. Cross
Ypsilanti
In Depot Town
485-4930

RIVER ARTWORKS
CUSTOM FRAMING
DESIGNER MATS
482-8785
• PROFESSIONALS WITH ALL GRAPHICS, NEEDLECRAFT FRAMING OF OBJECTS
ARCHIVAL FRAMING
• GALLERY OF ORIGINAL ART
• RENTAL WORKROOM
48 E. CROSS
Depot Town

The Cricket Box
a specialty gift & card shop
We're moving to 19 East Cross Street !!
...Please join us for our Grand Opening in our new location on Saturday, November 15, 1986...
Come see all our new Christmas merchandise !!
...We will be offering 20% off on all our boxed Christmas cards Nov. 15 thru Nov. 30...
19 East Cross Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198
(313)487-5595
located in Ypsilanti's historic "Depot Town"

Special Holiday Issue of The Rag will include a completely different interior format featuring Richard Haas' new children's story "A Depot Town Mystery." The delightful entertainment features examples from the district which include both living and built specimens. Watch for Frog Island, the Alibi Bar, the Follett House, and 'Jonesy' in the December issue. It's one you'll want to save for your grandchildren.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS IN RIVERSIDE PARK

A "Festival of Lights," spearheaded by the Ypsilanti Visitor's and Convention Bureau and abetted by local donations and sponsorships will take place in Riverside Park beginning November 15th and running through January 7th. Thousands of family automobiles are expected to enter the display from East Cross Street to enjoy the color holiday lighting displays and decorated trees.

VICTORIAN HOLIDAY IN DEPOT TOWN

Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town will continue to host it's annual celebration of the heritage of it's old buildings, if not it's ethnic heritage. A merchants committee has been meeting and planning for this year's event. Here's the plan, so far:

Saturday, November 15th:

— **Victorian Window Display Judging**

Sunday, November 16th:

— **Depot Town Holiday Open Houses**

Other dates remain to be set for:

— Carriage Rides
— Santa's Parade
— Our lady's Madrigal Singers Concert
— The film, "It's a Wonderful Life"

A DICKENS OF A TIME DOWN IN DEPOT TOWN

When Charles Dickens toured America he didn't much like the place. Or the people. In fact, he described us as a bunch of hooligans and backwoods bumpkins. Indeed, at the height of Michigan's lumber days, railroad towns and district like Ypsilanti's Depot Town were certainly not living up to their archetectural beginnings.

Since that time the post-industrial revolution has tuned this rail town into a terribly civilized place which lives up to the motto recently posted in the neighborhood caboose: "Firmly rooted in the past - with a clear view forward."

It is with this direction in mind that we invite the community to enjoy a Christmas holiday in the old-fashioned tradition. And, since many of us formed our view of the Victorian era through the works of Charles Dickens, we encourage our shop owners and patrons to dress as ladies and gentlemen of the period for the event. Stroll the wintry sidewalks and warm shops of another time; a time when the music was 'live' and the conversation was lively. - Caroling, mingling with friends and neighbors, visiting old friends, shopping in friendly shops, enjoying the warmth and beauty of the season.

So, dress up for the occasion!! Nobody cares if you're a Dickens scholar or if you fell in love with the style through the 1938 British movie - or in the 1951 version, or the Henry Winkler or Fred Flinstone versions of "A Christmas Carol." It's a jolly good time to play "ye Olde English" anyway.

Miss Evangeline Lewis said, "In the old days Ypsilanti was an elegant place, but never stuffy!" Let's carry on the tradition with this year's Victorian Holiday down in Depot Town.

DEPOT DOO
"fine design in hair style"
In Historic Depot Town
25 East Cross Street • 313/484-3045
Ypsilanti, Michigan

Hon's
Flowers & Fancies
46 E Cross • 482-2124
DEPOT TOWN, YPSILANTI

Miller's
ICE CREAM
42 E. Cross Ypsilanti, Michigan
485-7548
WEEKLY SPECIALS

NOVEMBER

SIDETRACK
GOOD FOOD GOOD DRINKS GOOD TIMES
Located in historic Depot Town
56 E. Cross, Ypsilanti
483-1035

THERE'S A NEW
ITALIAN
IN DEPOT TOWN
PAPONETTI'S PASTA
Specializing in Homemade Italian Food & Pastries
YOUR HOUSE OR OURS
WE CATER, TOO!
17 E. Cross • Depot Town 483-3574

RAGTIME
Having A Dickens Of A Time
DOWN IN DEPOT TOWN

Eggs Milk Grains Produce Nuts Dried Fruits
Pasta Bread Juices Herbs Canned Goods Yogurt
Goasts Milk Tempeh Teas Spices Tofu Beans
YPSI FOOD COOP
312 N. River 483-1520
Sun. 12 - 4 Mon - Fri 10 - 7 Sat. 9 - 6

A COMPLETE LINE OF PREMIUM VITAMINS, HERBS & NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS
the VITAMIN SHOPPE
9 E. Cross • Ypsilanti, MI 48198 • 313/485-2711

Old Town RESTAURANT
Home Cooked
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Historic Depot Town

483-3637
Our Little Secret
Resale Clothing & Other Niceties
23 E. Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
In Historic Depot Town

PRONTO
PIZZA & SUBS
37 E. CROSS • DEPOT TOWN
YPSILANTI
483-4555
SUN-THUR 4-12 FRI & SAT 4-2
Free Delivery
on orders over $4.00

Ypsilanti's Farmers Market
in historic Depot Town
Every Saturday from
Nov. 15 - Dec. 13
Holiday Bazaar
Start your Christmas shopping at the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market which is specializing in holiday craft items, baked goods, decorations, caroling and other music of the holiday season and the bountiful fresh produce of the fall harvest.

What, exactly are the "other niceties?"
Well, for example:
— dried floral wreaths and weddings bouquests by our own Louise Wilson
— Victoria books, postcards, calendars and novelties
— costume jewelry
— sepia postcards of this area and EMU
— all sorts of old hats
— lithograph gramed prints
And, of course, clothing
— taken in on 50/50 consignment
— children's teen's, women's and some men's

Extra 10% off anything with this ad!

Audrey's
Depot Town
Ypsilanti, Michigan

Typesetting
New Type Styles
BROCHURES — FORMS
Hansen's
STANDARD PRINTING
35 East Cross • 483-0339

DISTANCE TO CHICAGO
By way of
MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD.
518 MILES.

DISTANCE TO CHICAGO
By way of Lake
ST. CLAIR, HURON, AND MICHIGAN.
1056 MILES.